

SUMMARY

- P. 2 JOBS: Over ECU 2,500 million for employment this year.
Young people and impoverished regions will get priority.
- P. 3 CONSUMERS: Putting accidents in the home on computers
At stake: 50,000 lives each year and ECU 30,000 million.
- P. 4 FOOD AID: Commission to help Polish children
After Chernobyl, an appeal from the Polish church.
- ARCHITECTURE: Preserving the Community's architectural heritage
The European Commission awaits your projects. Deadline: July 1.
- P. 5 HOUSING: Home loans for miners and steel workers
European Commission to lend ECU 131 million.
- MOTORING: Community motorists should belt up
Community tries to harmonize use of safety belts.
- P. 6 RESEARCH: European programme has stimulated scientific interchange
The balance sheet of the experimental stage of a new programme.
- P. 7 OIL: Surplus of another kind
Three possible scenarios for Europe's oil refineries.
- P. 8 BROADCASTING: Commission proposals would stimulate television without
frontiers
The European Commission's latest proposals.
- P. 9 MOTOR VEHICLES: "cleaner" Diesel engines in 1988?
The Commission proposes anti-pollution measures for Diesel engines.

This newsheet is published in six languages (English, French, German, Dutch, Italian and Spanish) by the Directorate-General for Information, Communication and Culture of the

Commission of the European Communities,
Rue de la Loi 200 - 1049 Brussels - Belgium.
Tel.: 2351111 - Telex: 21877 COMEU B

Its contents do not necessarily reflect the official views of the Community institutions.



JOB'S: Over ECU 2,500 million* for employment this year

This year thousands of Europeans will be able to receive training, find a job or change occupations, thanks to aid amounting to more than ECU 2,500 million which the European Commission has just released from the European Community's Social Fund.

Priority is being given, as required under the Fund's rules, to the young and to the more impoverished areas of the Community. The under-25s will receive nearly ECU 1,900 million, which is considerably more than the 75% the Social Fund must allocate to the young. Nearly ECU 900 million will be spent on young people living in the Community's poorest regions.

The Fund is also required to devote at least 45% of its aid to the Community's impoverished regions - i.e. to all of Ireland, Greece and Portugal, as well as Northern Ireland, the Italian Mezzogiorno, France's overseas departments and much of Spain. The Commission has earmarked over ECU 1,100 million in all for these areas.

Most of the schemes the Fund will be subsidizing provide training. The Fund is giving ECU 165,000, for example, to a project which will train 200 secretaries from the Tyne and Wear in modern office skills. A training programme for tourist guides in Greece is to receive ECU 200,000. Over ECU 1 million have been earmarked for training 1,261 jobless young people from the poorer parts of Spain for the computer, metal-working and food industries.

Another project, Archimedes, will help two groups of young, unemployed Italians go into business for themselves. Nearly ECU 300,000 is being made available to the project to provide training in management techniques.

As in previous years, the European Commission is also funding innovative activities aimed at creating new jobs. Some ECU 95 million have been set aside for this purpose.

Italy and the U.K., with ECU 554 million and ECU 414 million respectively, are the major beneficiaries this year. The Commission has earmarked ECU 379 million for France, ECU 356 million for Spain, ECU 227 million for Ireland, ECU 224 million for Portugal and ECU 143 million for Greece.

* 1 ECU = UK£ 0.64 or IR£ 0.71.

CONSUMERS: Putting accidents in the home on computers

If all goes well, the European Community will be in a position, five years from now, to save 50,000 lives each year and economize some ECU 30,000 million*, thanks to an electronic information system for accidents in the home. A 5-year demonstration programme, aimed at perfecting the system, has just been launched by the EC.

Road accidents, however spectacular, account for only 6% of all accidents in the Community. Accidents at work represent another 10 to 15%. However, most accidents - between 75 and 80% of the total - take place in the home or while at play.

These accidents kill some 50,000 people and injure more than 40 million each year, according to the specialists. Quite apart from their effects on people's lives, their financial impact is enormous: every year some 2 million workers are obliged to stop work.

The European Commission has put the costs of hospitalization and medical insurance at over ECU 30,000 million a year for the 12-nation Community - a sum roughly equal to the entire Community budget!

Since 1973 a special information system for accidents in the home has enabled the United States to reduce the number of victims by five million and to save roughly \$14,000 million over 10 years. This represents a fall of 28% in the number of accidents and of 27% in the number of deaths. In the U.K. and the Netherlands, which have introduced systems similar to the American, the number of accidents in the home has also fallen.

The EC envisages the creation of a data bank which could provide reliable information on the nature and frequency of home accidents, as well as the causes, especially when they are linked to the use of a particular product or piece of equipment. The data bank would also make it possible to improve product labelling and to keep consumers informed.

From 1990 the data bank would receive information on some 400,000 to 900,000 cases a year, from 90 hospitals. Some 35 of them will be supplying information from the end of this year. The European Commission has already signed contracts with 14 hospitals in Ireland, Greece, Italy, France and the Netherlands.

* 1 ECU = UK£ 0.64 or IR£ 0.71.

FOOD AID: Commission extends emergency aid for Polish children

Those most at risk from the fall-out from the nuclear accident at Chernobyl are the very young, of course, simply because milk is so easily contaminated by radioactivity. The ban on the sale of fresh milk throughout Poland is depriving the country's children of a basic foodstuff.

The Polish church has therefore launched an appeal for aid, to which the Commission of the European Community has quickly responded by making available 370 tonnes of milk powder. It is being sent, for distribution by the Church, through a Catholic charity, Caritas-Belgium.

The cost of the emergency aid is some ECU 500,000*.

* 1 ECU = UK£ 0.64 or IR£ 0.71.

ARCHITECTURE: Preserving the Community's architectural heritage

One of Europe's major assets is likely to be eroded away if steps are not taken to preserve it. The asset is the European Community's architectural heritage. Built up over thousands of years, it is under growing threat from a preference for "modernity".

In a People's Europe the Parthenon is as important as a rising GNP. It is not surprising, therefore, that the European Community should have launched a programme, aimed at safeguarding its architectural heritage, in 1984.

The Community now contributes annually to the restoration of the Parthenon in Greece. But the European Commission believes it is even more important to contribute to the restoration and preservation of historic monuments and sites which are perhaps not as well known.

It is therefore inviting proposals once again for pilot projects aimed at preserving monuments or sites in member states. Some ECU 500,000*, representing the Community's share of total costs, will be shared among a maximum of fifteen projects.

To be eligible, the sites must enjoy a European reputation and be open to the public. Local or national authorities must agree to bear part of the costs.

Proposals must reach the European Commission by July 1. They must conform to the procedure set out in the Community's Official Journal of April 25 (N° C 97). Copies can be obtained from HM Stationery Office (51 Nine Elms Lane, London) or the Government Publication Sales Office, in Molesworth Street, Dublin.

* 1 ECU = UK£ 0.64 or IR£ 0.71.

HOUSING: Home loans for miners and steel workers

Between this June and the end of 1988 it will be easier for European Community coal miners and steel workers to become home owners or to modernize their houses. The fact is the European Commission has decided to lend them ECU 131 million*, as soon as the Community ministers and a special committee have given it the green light.

The loans are being made under the housing programme of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the first of the three European "communities". Of the ECU 131 million, some ECU 41 million are being provided out of Community funds and will be lent at very low rates (1%). The Commission is borrowing the balance and will re-lend it at market rates. The funds are being made available through banks and other financial institutions.

Since 1954 nearly 190,000 houses have been built or improved under the ECSC's housing programmes. Some 100,000 of them are in Germany, 43,000 in France, 13,000 in the U.K. and 11,000 in Italy. Over 8,000 homes have been financed by the ECSC in Belgium, 6,000 in the Netherlands and 1,500 in Luxembourg, as well as several hundreds in Denmark, Ireland and Greece.

* 1 ECU = UK£ 0.64 or IR£ 0.71.

MOTORING: Community motorists should belt up

Motor vehicles cannot be sold freely throughout the European Community unless both front and back seats are fitted with seat belts. But this Community regulation, which dates from 1982, does not require the 12 member states to harmonize fully their national regulations, a Greek Euro-MP, Georgios Anastassopoulos, was told recently by the European Commission.

In all 12 countries the front seats must be equipped with seat belts, of the three-point type, under the EC regulation. But only the U.K., France, Luxembourg and Germany, as well as Belgium from next January, require rear seat belts also.

Seat belts must be worn by the driver and front-seat passenger in all EC countries. But most have specific derogations, which include taxi drivers and pregnant women.

TECHNOLOGY: European programme has stimulated scientific interchange

Scientific research in the 12 European Community countries is acquiring a European dimension, thanks in large part to a Community-funded programme whose title sums up its objective: "Action to Stimulate European Cooperation and Scientific and Technical Interchange".

Under a 2-year experimental phase, eight laboratories, from five different countries, worked together to develop elements for optical computers (which will be much faster as they will use light beams to process information). In another project, teams from three countries developed methods for testing the toxicity of medicines, which could replace experiments with animals.

The "stimulation action", in Community jargon, stems from the European Commission's conviction that the Community is not making full use of its immense scientific potential because of national, disciplinary or institutional barriers. At the same time, the EC must make the most effective use of its scientific and technical manpower if its industries are to remain fully competitive at home and abroad.

Following the success of the experimental phase (1983-84), the Community has now launched the "Stimulation Plan for 1985-88", with a budget of ECU 60 million* (as compared to ECU 7 million for the experimental phase). Some 170 projects, involving 440 research teams in the 12 member states, have already been selected.

Community funds are being used to twin laboratories located in different countries and to enable scientists and researchers to spend up to three years in laboratories taking part in cross-frontier research. The disciplines covered include optics, information technology, biology, pharmacology and oceanography. The 86 projects financed during the experimental phase resulted in over 400 scientific papers and a number of patents.

The "stimulation action" is obviously complementary to the Community's sectoral programmes, such as ESPRIT (information technology) and the biotechnology programme. It will be a key element of the next EC Framework Programme of Research and Development (1987-91): experience has shown that bringing laboratories and researchers together, across national frontiers, can raise the level of European research in spectacular fashion.

The European Commission in fact has already proposed that more money should be made available for this and other Community research programmes.

* 1 ECU = UK£ 0.64 or IR£ 0.71.

OIL: Surplus of another kind

The 12-nation European Community is a major market for oil products; domestic consumption last year amounted to nearly 430 million tonnes. Swings in the price of a barrel of oil crude can therefore have unsettling effects on the oil industry, starting with the refining sector. Here, despite the industry's efforts at rationalization, there is surplus capacity.

The European Commission's experts have tried to estimate the size of this surplus in relation to changes in the price of crude. Clearly, if there is substantial over-capacity, refineries are run at lower levels of efficiency.

The installed refining capacity in the 12-nation EC stood at 615 million tonnes a year in January, when the estimated surplus was some 50 million tonnes. The industry plans to cut back refining capacity by some 40 million tonnes by 1990 (after having reduced it by roughly this amount during 1985 alone). Most of the refineries to be shut down are in France and Italy.

But the size of the surplus will depend on the price of crude. The Commission's experts have therefore drawn up three different scenarios, based on oil prices ranging from \$15 to \$25 a barrel. Depending on the oil price, the surplus in 1990 could be as low as 0 tonnes or as high as 55 million tonnes a year.

In the basic scenario oil prices stabilize at \$20 a barrel and demand holds steady over the period 1985-90. In this case the surplus would be 25 million tonnes, assuming that the industry has carried out its plans to reduce capacity by 40 million tonnes.

The surplus refining capacity would virtually disappear if the oil price stabilizes at \$15 a barrel (and industry reduces refining capacity by 40 million tonnes). Eventually, only one or other obsolete refinery would need closing down to bring refining capacity and demand into balance.

The third scenario is based on oil at \$25 or more a barrel, and represents a continuation of the trend of the last 10 years. At this price level demand for refined products would fall by some 5% and the surplus capacity would amount to roughly 55 million tonnes.

Taking out the surplus capacity would inevitably mean fewer jobs. Job losses have been relatively small so far, except in certain areas. Depending on the scenario, the loss of direct employment could be anywhere between 5,000 to 10,000 jobs.

BROADCASTING: Commission proposals would stimulate television without frontiers

The Commission of the 12-nation European Communities (EC) is pushing ahead with its plans for a common market for television. It has just sent the member states a draft directive aimed at coordinating national legislation on the production and distribution of television programmes within the EC. Programmes which conformed to the directive could be received and transmitted freely in all member states.

The laws the Commission wants coordinated include those on advertising and sponsorship as well as the protection of children. Their coordination would take the form of a limited number of rules, amounting to the minimum needed to protect the various interests at stake. While member states would be free to impose stricter, or more detailed, requirements for programmes originating within their own territory, the main thrust of the directive is in the direction of greater liberalization.

The Commission's proposal is firmly grounded in its Green Paper, "Television without frontiers", adopted in 1984. Its starting point is the growing capacity of broadcasting systems to send programmes cheaply over great distances, via satellites. The Commission wants to avoid the unfortunate situation created by the existence of two competing systems, PAL and SECAM, in earthbound television broadcasting.

The proposed directive is to be seen, therefore, as part of the Commission's global policy, aimed at helping, politically and financially, the production, co-production and satellite distribution of European programmes. The Commission is also trying to ensure the free flow of broadcasts and to encourage trade in goods and services within the EC. However, since broadcast advertising remains a sensitive political issue in two member states, where it is still banned, the draft directive does not seek to make its acceptance legally binding.

Broadcasting clearly is a service covered by the EC Treaty. But as long as technology limited the scope of cross-frontier broadcasting, the Treaty's provisions were of limited significance. Today, Community broadcasters have access to Community-wide audiences.

The Commission believes that the new technologies, skilfully handled, offer the EC the opportunity to stimulate broadcasting as a key sector of its telecommunications industry, and to develop the technology needed to compete on world markets. But the free flow of programmes should also encourage the cultural and political interpenetration which a People's Europe needs to exist.

MOTOR VEHICLES: "cleaner" Diesel engines in 1988?

Cars equipped with Diesel engines will become the target for lower exhaust emissions in 1988, if the ministers of the 12 European Community member states adopt the two regulations the European Commission has just sent them. The regulations, one of which covers cars, the other trucks, set relatively strict emission standards.

Diesel engines are less polluting than those which run on petrol. Even so, experts have estimated at 183,000 tonnes the total quantity of pollutants spewed out by Diesel engines in the Community each year. Motor cars are responsible for one quarter of this, or 45,000 tonnes.

This explains why the European Commission, having persuaded the Twelve to adopt an anti-pollution regulation for petrol-driven engines in March 1985, has now turned its attention to Diesel engines. The stakes are high, given that the number of motor cars fitted with Diesel engines is expected to rise to 15 million in 1995, as against 5.8 million in 1984. In the absence of a drive for "cleaner" engines, the level of pollutants will have risen to 107,000 tonnes, an increase of 137% over 1984.

The regulation seeks to reduce by 11% the level of pollution caused by cars. It provides for much stricter emission standards, which would apply to cars with an engine capacity of over 2 litres from 1 October 1988 and to the others from 1 October 1991.

At the end of 1984 some 60% of cars with Diesel engines were below 2 litres in capacity. This figure should rise to 75% towards 1995, in the view of experts.

The Commission wants the new exhaust emission standards to apply to trucks from 1 January 1988. The draft regulation aims at curbing the principal pollutants: emissions of hydrocarbons would be reduced by 30%, of carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides by 20%. The limits which the Commission has proposed for these vehicles are very similar to those currently in force in the United States.